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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/934,082	08/22/2001	Nicholas Alan Timothy Colford	045636-5050	7370
9629	7590	12/17/2003	EXAMINER	
MORGAN LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP 1111 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW WASHINGTON, DC 20004			HYLTON, ROBIN A.	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3727	
DATE MAILED: 12/17/2003				

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on October 16, 2003 has been entered.

Specification

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. Claims 1 and 3-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The structure set forth in claim 1 contradicts the disclosure at page 7, lines 8-18. It is here that a sleeve is described as surrounding the elastic members.
4. Claims 1 and 3-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The structure of the claims is not clearly set forth. What is the closure member and how do the elastic bands surround it?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
6. Claims 1,3 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones (US 2,685,981).

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Jones teaches a closure device **2**, closure mechanism **9**, peripheral support structure **3**, and a closure member as the central opening formed by crossing the deformable structures across one another. Wherein the wire members of the closure device are not considered elastically deformable, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an elastic band, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

7. Claims 1,3, and 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Karesh (US 4,078,686) in view of Jones.

Karesh teaches a plastic container having a closure device at each end.

Jones teaches it is known to provide a closure having a deformable opening and closing mechanism. Wherein the wire members of the closure device are not considered elastically deformable, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an elastic band, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the closures of Karesh with the closure of Jones. Doing so would allow for opening and automatic reclose of the container without removal of the closure device.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 4-11 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1,3 and 12-14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

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Conclusion

10. In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, Group 3720 is encouraging FAXing of responses to Office Actions directly into the Group at (703) 872-9306. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify the examiner and art unit at the top of your cover sheet. Papers submitted via FAX into Group 3720 will be promptly forwarded to the examiner.

11. It is called to applicant's attention that if a communication is faxed before the reply time has expired, applicant may submit the reply with a "Certificate of Facsimile" which merely asserts that the reply is being faxed on a given date. So faxed, before the period for reply has expired, the reply may be considered timely. A suggested format for a certificate follows:

I hereby certify that this correspondence for Application Serial No. _____ is being facsimiled to The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office via fax number (703) 872-7306 on the date shown below:

Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate

Signature _____

Date _____

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robin Hylton whose telephone number is (703) 308-1208. The examiner works a flexible schedule, but can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern time).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lee Young, can be reached on (703) 308-2572.

If in receiving this Office Action it is apparent to applicant that certain documents are missing, e.g., copies of references cited, form PTO-1449, form PTO-892, etc., requests for copies of such papers should be directed to Errica Bembry at (703) 306-4005.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.

RAH
December 13, 2003



Robin A. Hylton
Primary Examiner
GAU 3727